

REMARKS

Claims 1-4 and 7-20 remain pending for consideration, with claims 1 and 11 being independent. No claims have been added or cancelled.

Claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the small diameter portion is not a cutout but rather a portion of the roller which has a smaller diameter throughout its entire circumference, as illustrated in at least Figures 6, 7B and 7C of the present application.

Accordingly, claim 1 has been amended to recite that the small diameter portions each have a circular cross-sectional shape with a radius substantially the same in all directions, thus excluding a cutout as depicted in Figure 1 of Kitai.

Independent claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Kitai (U.S. Patent No. 4,781,667). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

In the outstanding Official Action the Examiner relied on Kitai as disclosing a sheet folding apparatus with a pair of rollers that have a single large diameter portion 82 and small diameter portions 81 at both sides of the large diameter portion 82 (see Figure 1, 3, and 4). Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's interpretation of the claims of the present application and the disclosure of Kitai. More specifically, Applicants respectfully disagree that a cutout as illustrated by member 81 in Kitai corresponds in any way to the pair of small diameter portions 464 in the present application. Indeed, merely by using cutouts one does not form a gap at the small diameter portion between the pair of folding rollers that is smaller than or equal to a thickness of the sheet as folded.

Nevertheless, in order to expedite prosecution, Applicants have further amended claim 1 to more clearly recite the small diameter portions and, specifically, to recite

those small diameter portions in a manner which expressly excludes coverage of a cutout as depicted in Kitai. In Kitai the cross-section of the small areas covering the cutout 81 do not have a circular cross-sectional shape with a radius substantially the same in all directions, as recited in claim 1 and clearly evidenced by viewing Figures 1, 3, and 4.

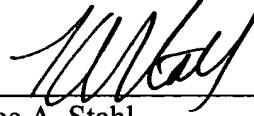
For the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that Kitai neither discloses nor suggests the invention as recited in claim 1.

The remaining claims in the above application are dependent claims which depend either directly or indirectly from claim 1 and are therefore patentable over the art of record for reasons noted above with respect to claim 1. In addition, each recite features of the invention still further distinguishing it from the applied art. Favorable and independent consideration thereof is respectfully sought.

Applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the above application are respectfully sought.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. Stahl', is written over a horizontal line.

Lawrence A. Stahl
Attorney for Applicants
Registration No. 30,110

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York 10112-3801
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200

LAS:eyw

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